
How to take Bach remedies and dosage

You can take the remedies in several ways, and the instructions here are designed to be easy to remember. Taking larger doses at one time doesn't have a stronger effect; but if you are going through a crisis you can take more frequent doses to get you through it.

The 'glass of water' method

For short-term moods and problems put two drops of each selected remedy in a glass of water. Sip as often as required until relief is obtained. If using the pre-mixed emergency formula (Rescue Remedy), add four drops to the glass instead of two.

You can use this method for longer-term problems as well. Just sip from the glass throughout the day, at least four times a day - and keep the glass in the 'fridge or make up a fresh glass each day.

Personal mixes

For more chronic problems we recommend making up a personal mix of remedies in a dropper bottle, as it is cheaper and will make your precious stock remedies go further. Simply:

- Get an empty 30ml bottle with a dropper in the lid (try the local pharmacy)
- Add to the bottle two drops of each selected remedy (and/or four drops of the pre-mixed emergency formula (Rescue Remedy))
- Top the bottle up with still (i.e. not fizzy) mineral water
- From this bottle take four drops, at least four times a day

Personal mixes will last two or three weeks if you keep them cool - in the fridge, for example. If that isn't possible - maybe you live somewhere warm or will be carrying the bottle around in your pocket - add a teaspoon of brandy to the bottle before topping up with water. This will help keep the water from going off. If you don't want to use brandy, use cider vinegar or glycerine instead.

Direct on the tongue

You can also take remedies 'neat', without diluting them. This is the most expensive way to take remedies and tastes strongly of brandy (unless you are using a stock remedy bottled in glycerine etc.), so is not recommended - but it is just as effective.

To make it easy to remember, you take the same number of drops when taking a neat stock remedy as you do when you are adding remedies to a personal mix or a glass of water: two drops, direct on the tongue.

If you are taking the pre-mixed emergency formula (Rescue Remedy) the dosage is four drops, again direct on the tongue.

In either case, repeat as necessary - at least four times a day for long-term use.

Frequently asked questions about dosage and safety

Do the remedies work faster if you don't dilute them?

If you don't dilute them the brandy in the stock bottle will taste stronger and this may give the impression that the essences are stronger. This isn't the case. There is no difference in potency or speed of effect between taking four drops from a mixing bottle and taking neat stock remedy.

Is it safe to take the remedies if you are pregnant?

Yes, it is safe. The alcohol in the undiluted remedy can usually be ignored as the amount in a dose is so small. However, if you have any worries on this score we would always advise that you talk to your doctor or midwife.

Is it safe to take the remedies alongside other kinds of medicine?

Normally there is no problem with taking Bach remedies alongside other medicines. The active ingredient in a flower remedy is an energy from the plant, not a physical substance, so it will not interfere with the physical action of the other medicine. Nor will the other medicine stop the Bach remedy from working.

The only point of caution concerns the alcohol used to bottle and preserve the remedies. This can usually be ignored as the amount of alcohol in a single dose is minute. But you should check with your prescribing doctor, pharmacist or health advisor before taking an alcohol-based Bach remedy if you have been advised to avoid all traces of alcohol.

How soon does the crisis combination (Rescue Remedy) take effect? How soon do the other remedies make a difference?

The crisis formula works quite quickly, because people use it for emergency situations rather than deep-rooted problems.

The other remedies can also work quickly, but if you are dealing with something that has been around a long time then it can take weeks or even months to see a real difference.

How many remedies can I take at the same time?

It's quite usual to take up to six or seven remedies together at the same time, and this is the rule of thumb maximum we suggest people work with. Dr Bach is known to have given nine remedies together on two occasions, but he was seeing thousands of people over a period of many years.

It's quite common for people to feel they need more than six or seven remedies. Some might feel they need 12, 15, 20 remedies or more. The answer to this is to think about how you feel now and treat that. If you have a lot of remedies on your list but many of them are for things you felt yesterday or last week or ten years ago, then you can leave those out. Treat your main feelings, and when the remedies have dealt with these you can move on to the issues that were in the background.

Still, 'up to six or seven' is only a guideline. If you are sure you need eight, or even nine, then that won't do you any harm.

What if after starting to take the remedies I feel worse?

Bach remedies are gentle and positive. They can't put us into a negative emotional state. Still less can a remedy cause a rash or a headache: a chemical analysis of a personal mix in a bottle would show nothing but brandy and water.

But it's also true that taking remedies sometimes brings up other stuff. Cleansing emotions can be like raking last year's leaves out of a pond. The water will be clearer in the end, but it starts off looking dirtier.

This is why some of us feel subjectively worse when we start taking a mix. We are becoming more aware of feelings that were already there.

It also explains why others of us occasionally report apparent physical reactions - a brief headache, a minor skin irritation - or experience more vivid dreams. The remedies are cleansing negative emotions, and the effects of that cleansing is sometimes felt on other levels.

Practitioners have different approaches to this kind of situation. Some will suggest taking less than the usual four drops from a mixing bottle, aiming for a slower effect.

Others stick to four drops but suggest fewer than the usual daily minimum of four doses.

Others leave the mix and the amount as they were, but suggest using Dr Bach's emergency combination (Rescue Remedy) as well, on the basis that clients might need (to stretch the metaphor!) a lifebelt to keep their heads clear of the muddy water.

But there's another approach that many find more helpful.

Dealing with negative feelings is what the remedies do. Why not adjust the remedies in the mix if needed, to deal with any new emotions, and then take the usual amount even more often than before?

More frequent doses are known to be a good way to deal with pressing problems. This would normally be our recommended way to get through the nearest thing there is in the Bach system to a healing crisis.